

VASANTEEYA NAVA-SASYESHTI (HOLI)

Holi Parva, Holi Utsav, the festival of colors, is celebrated on the full moon day of the lunar month of Falgun (March). It is the one of the biggest festivals celebrated by the Indian Diaspora across the world.

The celebration lasts for 2 days, first day Holika Dahan and second is Holi. Holika Dahan is celebrated around a pyre, based on the story of Holika and Prahalad. Hiranyakashipu was an evil king who had ordered people to worship him as God. His son Prahalad, a child, refused to follow the orders. The king asked his sister, Holika to enter a blazing pyre with Prahalad in her lap. Holika had a boon that fire will never burn her, and the king had thought that she would come out of the fire safe. However, Holika was burnt to ashes and Prahalad, praying to God throughout this awful act, came out unharmed.

Question:

Did Holi start with either Shri Krishna and/or the story of Hiranyakashipu, Holika and Prahalad?

NO

Holi, in fact, derives its name from *Holaka*, roasted grains of the spring (*vasant*) harvest of new crops (*nava sasya*). Farmers perform yajnas (*ishti*) by lighting bonfires of the stalk and offering some of the new grains ...THANKSGIVING – humility and gratitude to bounteous Mother Nature and to God**. People gathered around those Yajnas in the fields.**

Holi, the bonfire as Yajna - an age old formula for wellness. Fire purifies. Grains of the new harvest, herbs, sweet, odoriferous substances mixed with ghee are offered to the Holi bonfire. ***Fire breaks these as micro particles (e.g. the aroma from spices added to heated oil) and spreading the essential oils therein as medicated vapors to enliven life***. The Holi bonfire reminds us to burn the evil thoughts, speech & physical actions out of our life and make way to add the colors of Dharma, righteous living.

Rishis (Vedic seers) prescribed special yajnas during spring (**Holi**) and fall (**Divali**) as well as other times like periods of heavy rainfall, drought, etc. as a scientific method to sanitize the environment, warding off disease spreading bacteria and viruses.

Festivals have a very wholesome bearing on people. Festivals break the monotony of life; create an environment of cultural harmony; teach us to bond with one another in friendship; carry moral, ethical and social values of life, that inevitably mix up with entertainment through festivals.

People smear brightly colored powder on each other. It's also time when we share some time, food, sweets, savories and presents with relatives, friends & neighbors. More importantly, it's

time to unfold our true human nature - practice compassion, helping the needy, and add colors to their life.

Holi is unifying: rejoicing with family and friends and cheer those in sadness; it brings harmony to the nation; and it spreads love and happiness.

Colors: Each color of the spectrum of colors during Holi, the flames of the bonfire, and the spring scenery of nature prompts us to unfold the humane kindness of our specie, humankind, amongst others: Self-respect, Respect the elderly, young, the learned, guests and other forms of life, as well as Respect Mother Nature and Follow the Divine Guidance.

The sharing of sweets is symbolical of the sweetness that we need to nurture sweetness in all our dealings: courtesy, love, and respect, stay on the track of dharma, and as per merits.

Spring reminds us of the fragrance of flowers, warmth, happiness, the vivid colors of bountiful Mother Nature, the consistent brilliance and energy of the sun, the tranquility of the moon and the expansion potential of air; the new foliage and the bright colors of the season are rejuvenating.

Let's ...embellish life with lots of colors (the rainbow of the universal living values) ...create an aura of hope, faith, serenity, creativity, enthusiasm, determination, liveliness, peace, harmony, and simplicity ...for a harmonious physical, mental-moral-spiritual & social immersion ...add real spiritual colors to life ...NOT for a day but Spirituality as Spiritual Reality in daily life, expand goodness in life and realize the values underlining the celebrations.

Then we'll realize the saying "जीवन में हर दिन होली हर रात दिवाली बन जायेंगे" (Jeevan mein har din holi har raat diwali) ...every day would be as colorful as Holi and every night brightly lit as Divali.



होली अभिनन्दन
HOLI ABHINANDAN
HAPPY HOLI



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March 07, 2023